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POGO PRIMER FOR PARENTS

(TV DIVISION)

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WALT KELLY

DEPOSITORY

POGO PRIMER FOR PARENTS (TV Division) will reassure and reward any parent who reads it. Television, as Pogo says, is probably here to stay. But how, when and how often children should watch it has baffled many parents.

Walt Kelly, with rare insight and uncommon skill, has set forth guidelines which will help any parent out of this dilemma in a way that is satisfying both to the parent and the child.

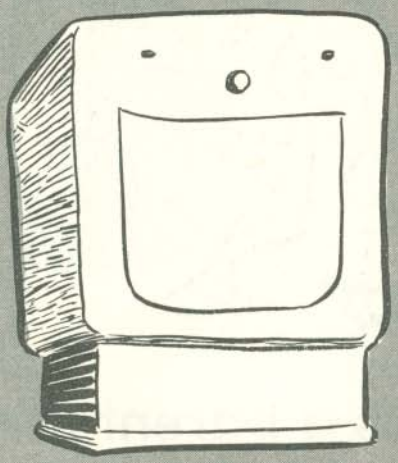
This primer *is* for parents. We hope that they will want to use it to set forth what *they* want, as parents—and as members of the community—in television programs for their children. Not only their own children but all children will benefit if they make their own convictions known.

Mr. Kelly's primer carefully applies concepts of mental health and child rearing embodied in the findings of the 1960 White House Conference on Children and Youth. The Children's Bureau is deeply grateful to him for what we think is an outstanding contribution toward richer and closer relationships between parents and their children. We believe, with Mr. Kelly, that parental selectivity of television fare for children can be a means of broadening their understanding of the world we live in and the culture which is our heritage.

Katherine B. Oettinger

KATHERINE B. OETTINGER
Chief, Children's Bureau

POGO PRIMER FOR PARENTS



This is a television set.

This is a parent...This is another.

This is a child.

This is a parent afraid of a t.v. set.

The child is not afraid of the t.v. set.

Why is the parent afraid of the t.v. set?

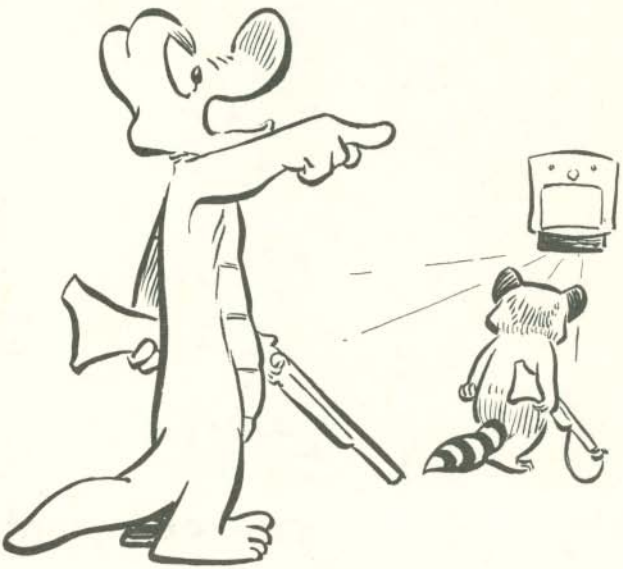
He is afraid because of what it might do to his child.

He thinks it might turn him into a monster.

He thinks it might turn him into an *ungrateful* monster...

....A monster who will destroy the happy home.

Why, then, does the parent let his child watch t.v.?



Maybe he feels little children should be seen and not heard.

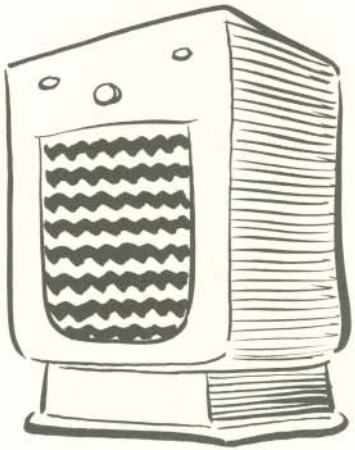
Maybe because he is busy with sports pages. It takes time to find out the editor is wrong about the box score.

Why does the mother parent let her child watch t.v.?

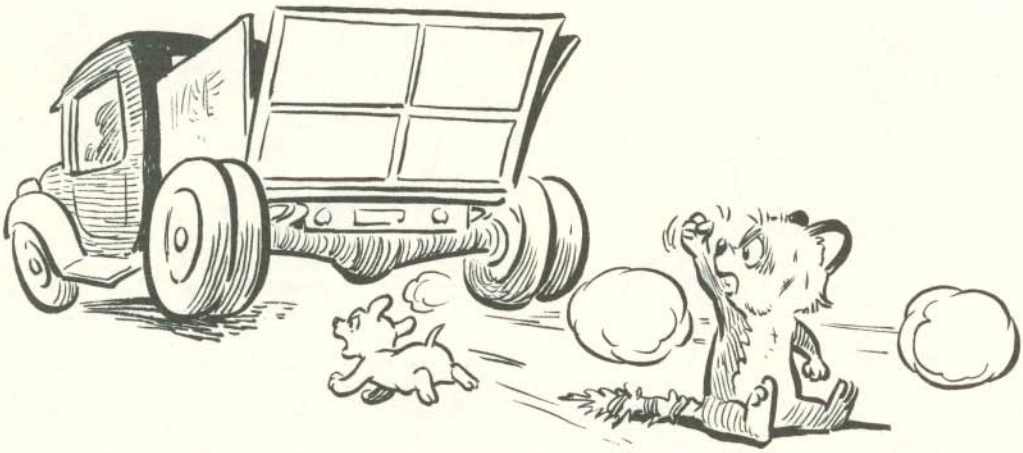
Because the telephone rings and it must be answered.

She must talk to somebody about something important.

She cannot do housework... And have headaches...

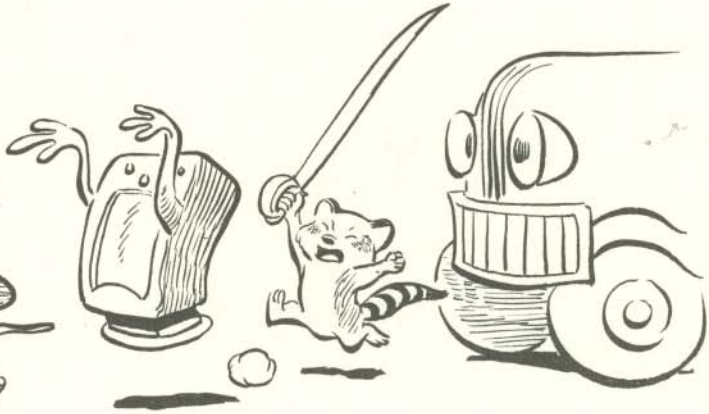


And watch children all day...
So she lets the t.v. set watch the children.

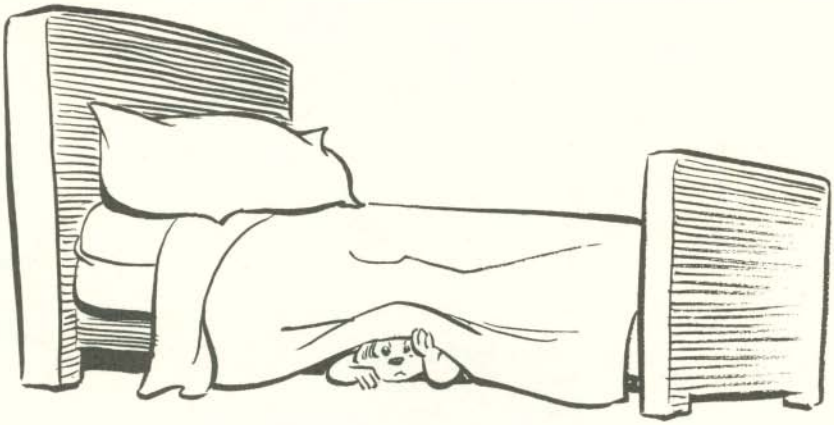


This is better than letting the child get run over by a truck.

This is what parents are afraid of:

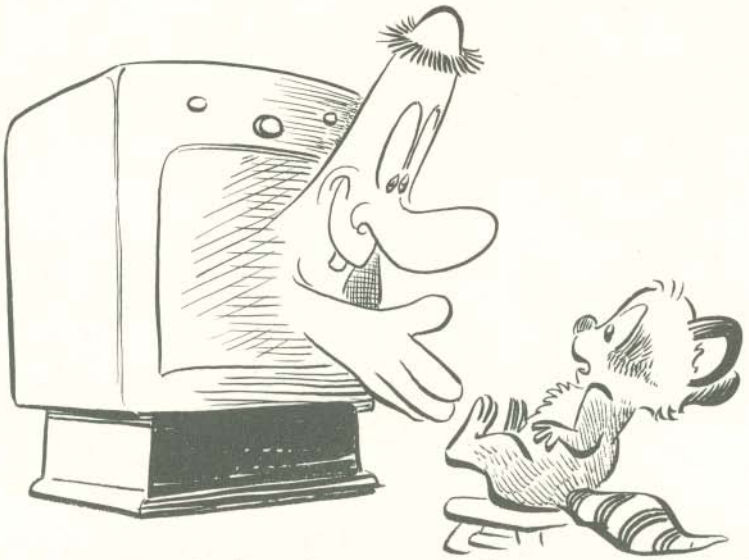


The t.v. set, children trucks...



What are little children afraid of?

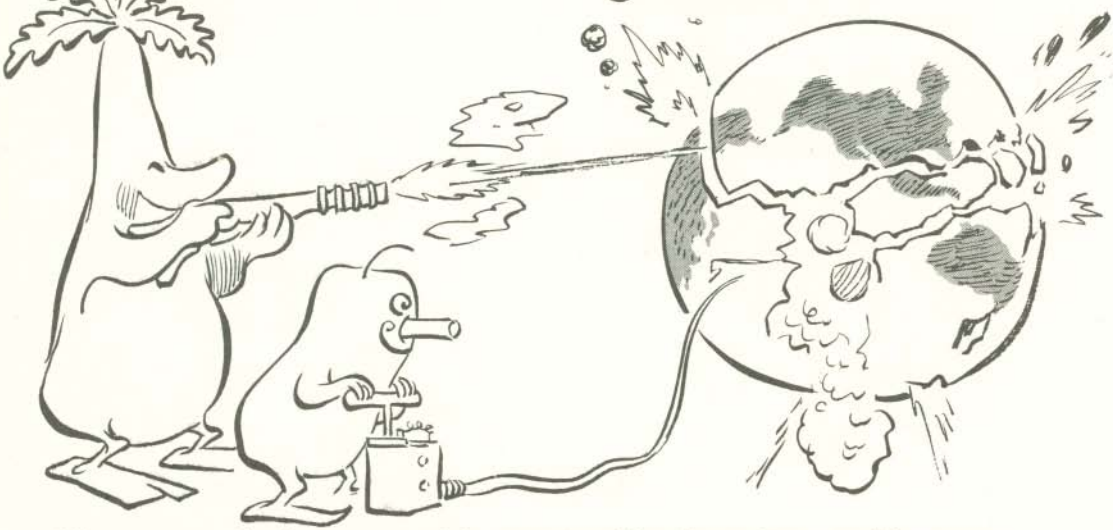
They are afraid of boredom, also *frustration*.
They want to know what to do...



They are afraid of monsters. On t.v. they sometimes meet a lot of them.

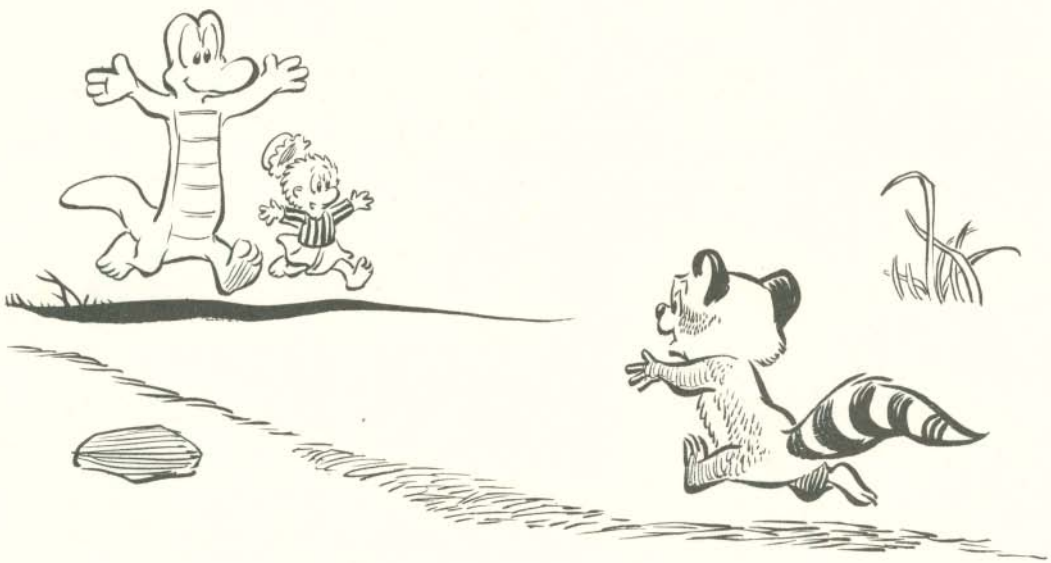
These monsters can become their constant companions.

Monsters are not as good as parents to learn things from.



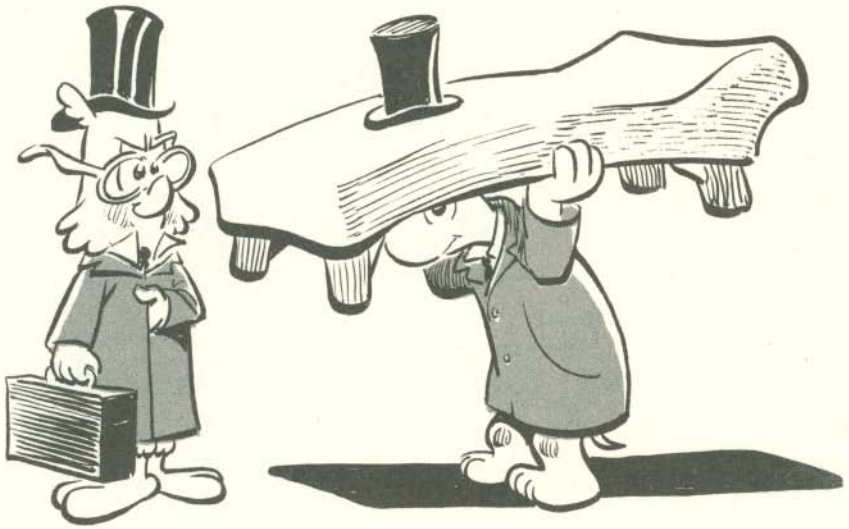
Except in matters of destruction.

What *does* the child want then?



He wants to be *loved*...
He wants guidance... He wants the parents to share things with him...
Maybe even t.v., radio, comic books, broccoli...

BRAND NEW CHAPTER



These are psychiatrists.
They are very learned men.

They care what happens to people.
They make notes.

They study people's heads... And make reports.

Sometimes the language of the reports is just for other psychiatrists.

Psychiatrists say things like:
Basic behavior patterns are not necessarily caused solely by mass media in whole or part--

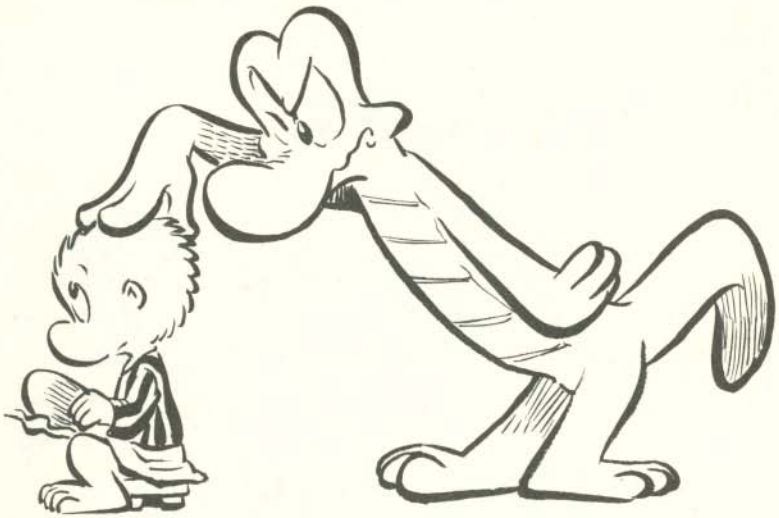
If you said that, you would be proud. You would be invited to speak at PTA meetings where you could drink lots of cold coffee and eat little wet cakes.

You'd be just like a psychiatrist...
He has patience.

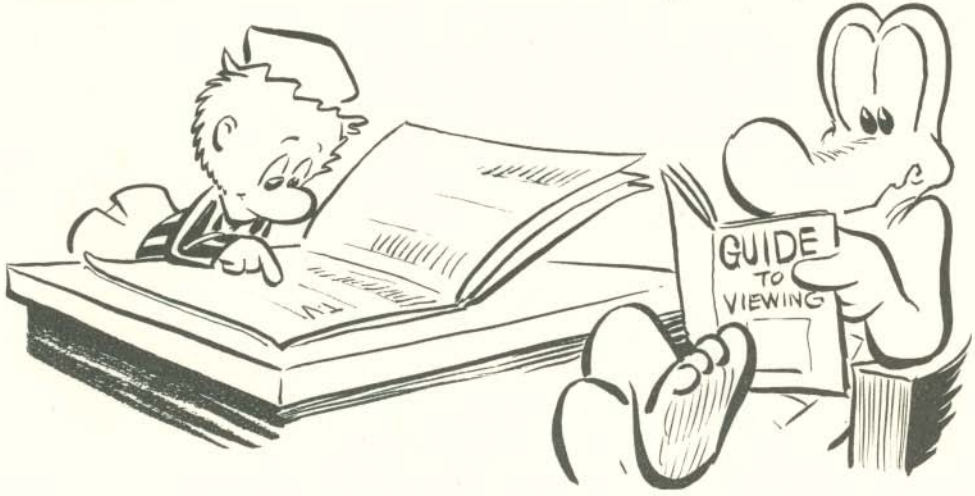
Not all things on t.v. are bad. Fathers know this. They watch ball games. *(It must be admitted some of them are bad.)*

Mothers know that not all things on t.v. are bad. They watch operas and folk singers.

(It must be admitted some of them are bad, too.)



But ball games and operas do not injure the tender brains of parents. (Nobody knows the effect of folk singers.)

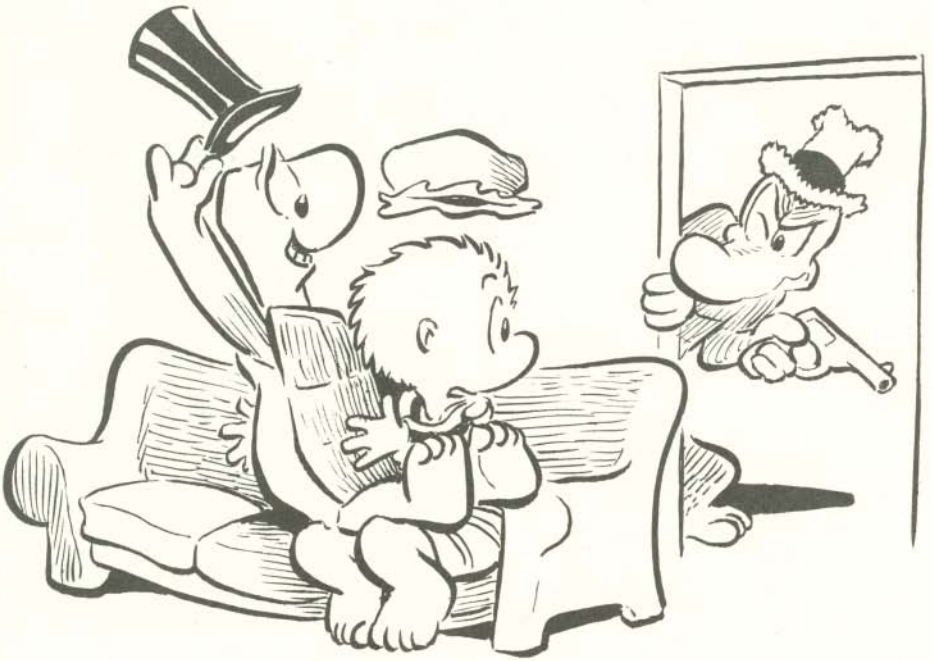


Parents can find out what is best for a child to watch on t.v.
If a child is not to be injured, he needs help.

Psychiatrists know
a lot about children.

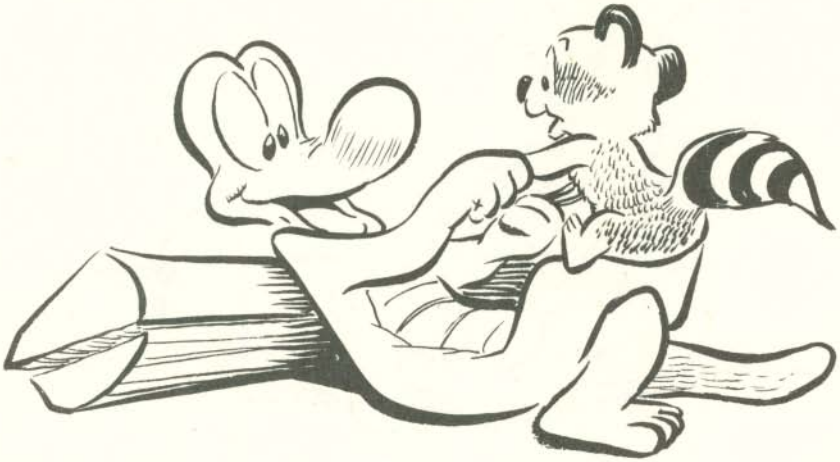
Children know a lot
about children.

But psychiatrists are not children.



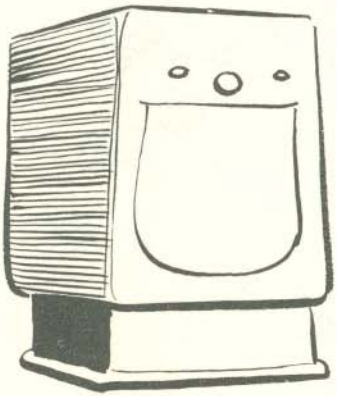
It is hard to dandle one on your knee.
A parent might have trouble.

It is better to dandle a child.
Of course, this could be trouble, too.



But the child might speak your language.
You might even learn to speak the child's.
Then you have established "communication".

You could be most successful saying, in your own way, that your child has many influences and chances are he'll be happy and reasonably normal if you make sure they are good ones.



You might find out that patient supervision of shared t.v. viewing would help your child be *more like himself.*

T.v. watching could be a normal part of a balanced whole. Just like radio, comic books, formal education and love...
... Also milk.

Psychiatrists would cheer you. They believe, most of all, in "do it yourself" happiness....

There are a few things to practice not doing. Do not be afraid of your t.v. set. These things are probably here to stay. Do not be afraid of your child. He is not here to stay. He is a precious visitor. Do not wind your child up and set him to watch the t.v. unguided. Do not wind the t.v. set up and set it to watch your child. A machine is a bad sole companion. It needs help. You can help it. Love your child.

There are a few things to remember. It is not necessary to censor. It is necessary to guide. Strong interest in the bizarre by any child deserves a few questions to find out why. The child needs someone to talk to. The overload of some features, monsters, etc., needs relief, not the bigger jolt each time. This prevents the creation of an addict. Other child activities siphon off energy, but this energy can be used badly after bad t.v. exposure. Above all, love the child.

* U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1961 OF—601995

OTHER CHILDREN'S BUREAU PUBLICATIONS FOR PARENTS

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C.

PRENATAL CARE. Children's Bureau Publication 4. 100 pp. (20¢)

Addressed to both mothers and fathers, this book gives information on pregnancy, childbirth, and care of the newborn baby.

INFANT CARE. Children's Bureau Publication 8. 106 pp. (15¢)

Designed to help mothers and fathers take care of their babies—especially a first baby. Its advice is based on the experience of doctors, nurses, nutritionists, psychologists, and parents. *Infant Care* was first published in 1914 and is now in its tenth edition.

YOUR CHILD FROM ONE TO SIX. Children's Bureau Publication 30. 112 pp. (20¢)

Describes the growth of children from one to six years of age and emphasizes the child's emotional needs and his relationship to other members of the family.

YOUR CHILD FROM SIX TO TWELVE. Children's Bureau Publication 324. 141 pp. (20¢)

Brings together the opinions of many specialists on how parents may help their children mature as healthy, well-adjusted, and socially responsible human beings.

THE ADOLESCENT IN YOUR FAMILY. Children's Bureau Publication 347. 110 pp. (25¢)

Tells how knowledge of the many changes that come about in the early teenage years can help parents understand their boys' and girls' growing need for independence.

A HEALTHY PERSONALITY FOR YOUR CHILD. By James L. Hymes. Children's Bureau Publication 337. 23 pp. (20¢)

This pamphlet tells about the part parents can have in helping their children achieve emotional and social health. One point seems to be agreed upon by all the people who study child growth—parents are the most important influence in their children's lives.

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS. Golden Anniversary White House Conference on Children and Youth. 1960. 429 pp. ($2.25). For sale by the National Committee for Children and Youth, 1145 19th Street, N.W. Washington, D.C.

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C. - Price 20 cents

Children's Bureau HEADLINER SERIES Number 2

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE

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